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Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 03593

EXDIS

FOR UNDER SECRETARIES COOPER AND BENSON FROM AMB. YOUNG

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: UNCTAD, ETRD, TECH
SUBJECT: UN NEGOTIATING CONFERENCE ON A CODE OF CONDUCT
ON THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

1. I UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE CONSIDERING NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE UN NEGOTIATING CONFERENCE ON A CODE OF CONDUCT ON THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 16 THROUGH NOVEMBER 10. THE PROSPECT OF OUR BOYCOTTING THE NEGOTIATING CONFERENCE CONCERNS ME GREATLY, PARTICULARLY AS IT WOULD COME ON THE HEELS OF THE IMPASSE IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (COW). NOT ONLY WOULD SUCH A STEP SERIOUSLY COMPLICATE OUR MANAGEMENT OF THE NORTH/SOUTH ISSUES DURING THIS YEAR'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BUT IT WOULD IN EFFECT REINFORCE THE G-77 INTERPRETATION THAT OUR POSITION ON COW REFLECTS A GENERAL UNWILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE LDC'S.

2. I RECOGNIZE THE CONCERN OVER OUR ATTENDING A NEGOTIATING CONFERENCE WHICH MAY NOT REACH A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION AND IN WHICH WE MAY BE SINGLED OUT AS A MAJOR OBSTACLE TO AGREEMENT. WHILE I WOULD NOT CONTEST THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SERIOUS DIFFERENCES WE AND OUR WESTERN AND INDUSTRIALIZED PARTNERS HAVE WITH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON THIS ISSUE, I BELIEVE WE WOULD BE IN A MUCH BETTER POSITION TO DEFEND BOTH OUR SUBSTANTIVE AND BROADER POLITICAL INTERESTS BY ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE. ALTHOUGH WE MIGHT BE ATTACKED AS PART OF THE WESTERN GROUP DURING SUCH A CONFERENCE, OUR ABSENCE WOULD NOT ONLY PRECLUDE OUR IN-

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FLUENCING SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION, BUT WOULD SUBJECT US
TO HEAVY ATTACK AS AN OBSTACLE TO DIALOGUE BOTH IN
GENEVA AND HERE IN NEW YORK DURING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

3. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT OUR FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE IN
THIS CONFERENCE WOULD BE INTERPRETED BY THE GROUP OF 77
AS A SIGNAL THAT WE NO LONGER ARE INTERESTED IN MAINTAINING
A DIALOGUE WITH THEM, PREFERRING INSTEAD TO RESORT TO
"STONE-WALLING" TACTICS. THIS WOULD BE JUST THE OPPOSITE
OF THE MESSAGE WE HAVE BEEN ENDEAVORING TO COMMUNICATE TO
THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HERE THESE LAST 20 MONTHS. OUR
REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CODE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD
PERSUADE THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THAT THE POLITICAL
MOMENTUM ESTABLISHED BY THE SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION HAS RUN
OUT AND THE TIME IS RIPE ONCE AGAIN FOR CONFRONTATION.

4. A DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CODE NEGOTIATIONS
WOULD ALSO SPILL OVER INTO THE UN CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (UNCSTD), WHERE WE ARE
MOUNTING A MAJOR EFFORT TO COME UP WITH A FORTHCOMING
U.S. POSITION. THE SUREST WAY TO GUARANTEE THAT THE CODE
DISCUSSIONS WILL BE A CENTRAL AND POLARIZING THEME OF THE
UNCSTD WOULD BE TO BOYCOTT THIS ROUND OF TALKS.

5. FOR ALL OF THESE REASONS I HOPE THE DEPARTMENT WILL
DECIDE TO AUTHORIZE US PARTICIPATION, EVEN IF ONLY AT
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A RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL, AT THE NEGOTIATING CONFERENCE
NEXT MONTH. YOUNG

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